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The Duke of the Howlat.



The Buke of the Howlat.
By Holland.



Printed at Edinburgh.
MDCCLXXXIII.



The Buke of the Howlat.

By Holland.



Printed at Edinburgh.
MDCCLXXIII.

THIS EDITION OF
THE BUKE OF THE HOWLAT
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
AND PRESENTED
TO THE PRESIDENT
AND MEMBERS
Of the Sannatyne Club
BY THEIR FAITHFULL SERVANT
DAVID LAING.

October 23, 1823.

THE BANNATYNE CLUB,

FEBRUARY MDCCCXXIII.

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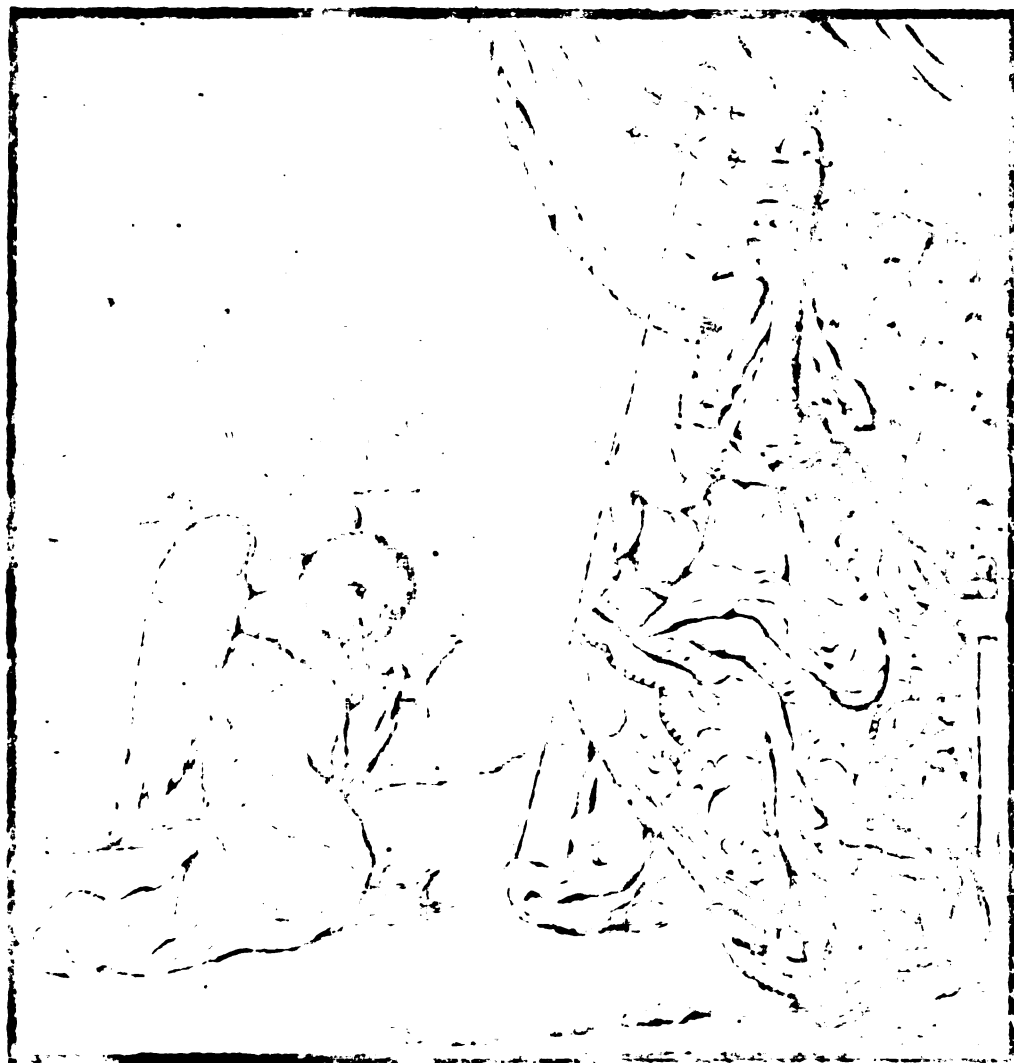
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The Buke of the Howlat. By Holland.



Printed at Edinburgh.
MDCCLXXIII.

some light on the dark veil of allegory under which its primary argument is usually supposed to be concealed.

The Poem itself comes to us in the form of a moral fable, illustrative of the danger of pride ; but an idea has been started by an ingenious writer, that, under this ostensible character, there lay concealed an invective against the person and government of James the Second of Scotland. "The length and nature of this Poem," says Mr Pinkerton, "founded on a trite fable, and the long panegyrick on the House of Douglas, convinced me that 'more was meant than meets the ear;' and the lines (in Stanza LXXVI.)

' We cum pure, we gang pure, bath KING and Comon ;
Bot THOW rell ~~THE~~ richtouss, ~~THY~~ CROWNE sall ourere,'

certify the idea that the Howlat is no other than the King James II.—a prince little deserving such a satire."¹

Such a hypothesis may be thought too plausible to be entirely rejected ; yet, if such a design did really exist, it was probably nothing more than a subordinate object of the author. But even this admission may perhaps ap-

¹ Pinkerton's *Scotish Poems*, &c. Vol. I. p. xxix. The reader will observe, that the reading of *thy crowne* in these lines is not warranted by either of the old manuscript copies.

pear too great to an attentive reader of the poem,—which is dated from Ternoway, the seat of the Earls of Moray; and which we are told was composed to please the Countess of Moray, *dowit* or wedded to a Douglas:—

“ Thus for ane Dow of Dunbar drew I this dyte,
Dowit with ane Dowglas, and baith war thai dowis.”²

The lady here meant is Mary Dunbar, who, in or before the year 1447, brought that Earldom to her husband, Archibald Douglas, third son of James, seventh Earl of Douglas.—But in order more fully to comprehend the tendency of the fable, as well as to fix the precise time when it was written, it will be necessary to advert in a more particular manner to the History of the *old Douglas days*.

Subsequent to the period when the reins of government were assumed by James II., that house, already the most potent in the kingdom, had received a great accession of power through the influence which William, eighth Earl of Douglas, possessed over the councils and affections of the youthful monarch. By his means, the younger branches of the family were raised to considerable dignities: for, as the excellent old historian of their race

² Stanza LXXVII. lines 1 and 2.

says of him, " he was as kind and forward to advance his friends, as he had been to quell his enemies." One of his brothers, Hugh, was created Earl of Ormond ; another of them, John, received the title of Lord of Balveny ; whilst a third, Archibald, as already has been mentioned, obtained in marriage the daughter of James Dunbar, Earl of Moray, who had died without male issue ; by which alliance, he procured the right and title to that earldom. This, it may be added, he obtained through his brother's influence, to the prejudice of James, second Lord Crichton, who, previous to the father's death, had been espoused to the elder daughter. But soon after the marriage of James II. with Mary of Gueldres, in 1449, the favour and power of Douglas began sensibly to fail ; till at length, partly in consequence of repeated acts of tyranny and oppression, joined to the representations of his enemies during his absence abroad, the King's affections were entirely alienated from him ; and it was deemed prudent to endeavour, by all possible means, to curb his exorbitant power and influence. This object was conceived to be the more urgent, inasmuch as the confederacy which Douglas had entered into with the Earls of Crawford, Ross, and some other of the Scottish nobles, for their mutual protection, was sufficient to alarm the monarch for his own safety, and the security

of the kingdom.—But the fate of the Earl of Douglas, who, in February 1452, was stabbed by the King's own hand, is well known, and need hardly be recapitulated.³

William was succeeded in the earldom by his second brother, Sir James, Master of Douglas, who had been educated for the church; and who, along with the Earl of Ormond, and several other friends and relatives, had accompanied Douglas to the town of Stirling. They immediately rose up in arms to revenge such an atrocious act; and, in contempt of the royal authority, they dragged the safe-conduct which Douglas had received, through the streets, ‘*at the tail of an ill-favoured spittle-jade, or mare;*’ speaking ‘*richt sclanderfully*’ of the

³ On the Monday before Fastrens-even, 21st February, Douglas having received a safe-conduct under the Great Seal, subscribed by all the Lords who at that time were with the King, by which they pledged themselves, “that *suppos the King wald brek the band forsaide, that thai suld let it at thair power,*” he was prevailed on to visit the Court, then held at the Castle of Stirling. “And this samyn Monunday, (in the words of a contemporaneous writer,) he passit to the castell, and spak with the King, that tuke richt wele with him be apperans, and callit him on the morne to the dyner and to the supper, and he come and dynit and sowpit. And thai said, thar was a band betwix the said Erll of Dowglas, and the Erll of Ros, and the Erll of Craufurd. And efter supper, at sevyne houris, the King then beand in the inner chalmer and the said erll, he chargit him to breke the forsaide band. He said he mycht nocht, nor wald nocht. Than the King said, Fals tratour, sen yow will nocht I sall, and stert sodanly till him with ane knyf, and straik him in at the coler, and down in the body. And thai sayd that Pa-

King, and all that were implicated in the Earl's death. After this, having collected their force, they burnt the town of Stirling, and continued to excite great commotions in the southern parts of Scotland:—but at length James—who had most anxiously endeavoured, in a Parliament convened for the express object, to vindicate himself from the charge of treachery, and the violation of publick faith,—partly by strenuous as well as lenient measures, succeeded in inducing them to return to their allegiance.⁴

There seems but little reason to doubt that the *Howlat* was composed in the course of the year 1453, during this interval of reconciliation. The author, in a long digression, gives a particular description of the *green-tree* of Douglas, with its armorial bearings; and the manner in which he speaks of its *four branches*, shews that he certainly means James, ninth Earl of

trik Gray straik him nixt the King, with ane poll ax on the hed, and straik out his harnes. And syne the gentillis that war with the King, gaf thaim ilkane a straik or twa with knyffis."—*Chronicle of James II. King of Scots*, 4to, p. 46.

—Published from Asloan's Manuscript by Thomas Thomson, Esq.

The reader may compare this account with the narrative of the excellent old historian of the family, David Hume of Godscroft, whose work ought to be familiar to every one who feels interested in the ancient annals of our country.

⁴ Pinkerton's History, vol. I. p. 220.

Douglas, and his three brothers, Archibald, Earl of Moray ; Hugh, Earl of Ormond ; and John, Lord of Balveny, who are, indeed, specially mentioned by name. —From this circumstance, it is evident, that, had the composition of the poem taken place immediately subsequent to the death of Earl William in 1452, we might at least have expected to find some allusion to an event which struck at the very root of all the grandeur and power of that house. The mere representation of the King, under the degrading form of an owl, complaining to the other birds of his deformity, would, at that time, be altogether insufficient to express the sentiments which the adherents of Douglas entertained of their Monarch ; although it might well enough serve to dimly shadow forth their feelings, when more caution and reserve, on their part, was necessary in any allusion to the King's person. But however this may be, no possible doubt can be entertained but that the *HOWLAT* must be dated previous, at least, to the battle of Arkinholm, in Dumfries-shire, which took place in May 1455 : for, on that occasion, the Douglasses having again appeared in open rebellion, Archibald, Earl of Moray, husband of the lady to whom the poem is addressed, was slain ; and his brother, Hugh, Earl of Ormond, taken prisoner and executed. In the following month, the

whole family of Douglas was attainted, and forced into exile. Well might Lyndsay, alluding to their fate, exclaim,

“ Quhare bene the douchtie Erlis of Dowglas,
 Quhilkis royallie, into this regioun rang ?
 Forfalt and slane ! quhat neidith mair process,
 Dame Curia thame duffullie down thrang.”⁵

Of the personal history of the author, whose name was HOLLAND, no kind of information has been discovered. We are even left in ignorance of his christian name ; but the poem carries with it the most convincing proof that he was a strenuous adherent of the noble and powerful family of Douglas. The surname of HOLLAND is, however, so uncommon, and the coincidence of situation and attachment so remarkable, as almost to place it beyond suspicion that the author of the HOWLAT may have been the SIR RICHARD HOLLAND, whose name occurs in an Act of Parliament, March 1482; in which a reward is offered for the apprehension of those *cummyn of gentill blude*,

⁵ Lyndsay's Works, vol. I. p. 319. “ Dame Curia,” says Mr Chalmers, “ is an allegorical personage of Lyndsay's creation ; and frequently brought forward by him. She guided the destinies of the court, and is frequently employed in hurling down courtiers from their eminence.”

who were followers of the exiled Earl of Douglas.⁶ But from the manner in which our author is mentioned by Dunbar, and by Sir David Lyndsay, along with the other Scottish *makars*, or poets, whom they commemorate, we may readily infer, that he was esteemed as a writer of some distinction; and Lyndsay, who connects his name with those of Merse, Henryson, and three other of their contemporaries, says with emphasis:—

“ Thocht they be deid, thair libellis bene livand,
 Quhilkis to reherse, makis reidaris to rejoice.”

⁶ This is an act “ for resisting and staynching of the tressoun of the traitour, James of Douglace, quhilk is now cummyng to the bordouris.” Besides the reward offered, as above-mentioned, there is a free remission to others who should forsake Douglas and come over to the King; but from this act of grace, Holland is specially excepted. This clause of the act is in the following words:—

“ Except the personis that pleses his hienes to except, That is to say, the traitouris, Jamis of Douglace, Alexander Jarding, Schir Richard Holland, and Maister Patrick Halyburton, priestis, and vther sic like tratouris that ar sworne Inglismen, and remanys in Ingland,”—*Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, vol. II. p. 139.

From this we learn, (supposing the person named to be our author,) that he was a priest, to whom the title of Schir in those days was given, and from whence originated the usual designation of their being the Pope's Knights. Thus Lyndsay says,

“ The pure priest thinkis he gettis na richt,
 Be he nocht stilit like an knicht,
 And callit *Schir*, before his name;
 As Schir Thomas, and Schir Williame.”

No other of HOLLAND's *libellis*, or writings, has reached our times, except the HOWLAT, which was first printed in the year 1792,⁷ from the copy preserved in Bannatyne's Manuscript, (written in 1568 ;) but the editor appears to have been singularly unfortunate in a transcriber; numerous passages which were of themselves sufficiently obscure, having been rendered absolutely unintelligible. The text of the present edition is taken from a transcript made some years ago, but since, very carefully collated with the more ancient copy, contained in a valuable manuscript, in the Auchinleck Library, which appears to have been compiled in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, (about the year 1515,) by one John Asloan, or Sloane; and which, in every respect, in so far as the HOWLAT is concerned, is indisputably superior to the other. The various readings afforded by a careful collation of these two manuscripts, (the only copies known to be extant,) are not of much importance; but such of them as seemed worth noticing, will be found in the Appendix, together with a few Notes, illustrative of the poem.

As the reader may be gratified to see a facsimile of the ancient manuscript, which has been followed, a few

⁷ In the Appendix subjoined to Pinkerton's Collection of *Scotish Poems*, reprinted from scarce editions. London, 1792, 3 vols. post 8vo.

lines are accordingly given from the end of the poem, to which is subjoined, the autograph of the transcriber.⁸

*In met full month of may
In mude of murray.
Lynby & bym-b-fenby*) *byfamt Golland*

*Lynby & bym-b-fenby of m. Gollat
M. M. Gollat of m. Gollat*

It may be proper, however, before expressing any sentiments as to the poetical merit of the HOWLAT, to give a brief summary of the fable,⁹ for the benefit of those readers who may not be very conversant with writings so

⁸ This, as well as the other ornaments in the volume, were executed by Mr Lizars; that on the title-page being taken from a very clever design by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., for which, and for many similar favours, I owe my best and most grateful acknowledgments.

⁹ In the following summary, much unnecessary trouble has been saved, in availing myself of an elaborate analysis of this poem, by the late Alexander Thomson, Esq.—kindly communicated to me by Dr Robert Anderson, from the collections of his lamented friend, which were intended for a History of Scottish Poetry; but in which no considerable progress seems to have been made.

antiquated and obscure. They will, by this means, be better enabled to judge for themselves respecting the notions which some people have entertained of its satirical tendency ; particularly, should any one, anxious to vindicate the character of the Scottish Monarch, propose the question,

“ Have you heard the argument ? Is there no offence in’t ? ”

The poet walks out at the *soft season* of the year, and, sitting down by the side of a river, (of the pleasures of which place, he declines giving any particular description, in order to avoid prolixity, having, as he says, *me-
kle matter in meter to gloss*)—he hears a piteous lamentation, uttered by an owl in a holly tree, who was looking with horror at his own visage in the water. The Owl resolves to appeal to the Pope of Birds, in the hopes, that, through the prayers and intercession of his holiness, Dame Nature may be prevailed upon to alter his appearance, and to *schape him a schand bird*. Accordingly, he comes to the Peacock, who is Pope, and falling reverently on his knees, receives his *braid benesoun* or bene-

diction. The Pope having heard his complaint, and considering it a weighty affair, directs his secretary, the Turtle, to summon a general council ; and the Swallow, as both herald and messenger, is dispatched on this errand. The different birds belonging to the Spiritual estate assemble, and the ecclesiastical dignities allotted to each of them are described. The council proceeds to deliberate on the case ; but a variety of opinions being expressed, it is thought preferable to defer coming to any decision, until the concurrence of the State Temporal is obtained. The Swallow is again sent off with letters, and finds the Eagle, or Emperor, in the Tower of Babylon, who graciously receives the message, and summoning his train of attendants, immediately sets out with them on their journey. They speedily arrive in Europe, and reach the forest in which the general convocation is held. The Emperor's attendants are then enumerated by the poet, among whom we find the Woodpecker, as pursuivant, bearing his arms, and those of the King of France, and the King of Scotland. Next to the arms of Scotland, are those of the Douglasses, who are designated by our author as the *weir-wall*, or bulwark of their country ; and, it is easy to see by the manner in which he speaks of them, the strength of his attachment to that family. The stanzas descriptive of their noble an-

cestor, who was chosen by Robert the Bruce, when on his death-bed, to carry his heart to the Holy Land, are very animated. After this romantick episode, he proceeds to describe the blazons of the other branches of the family ; but with all his minuteness, the author is afraid he has not said enough ; and more than once refers the readers to professed heralds, *to tell them the haill*.

Returning then to the fable, the temporal birds are welcomed by the Prelates, and kindly invited to dinner by the Pope. They are arranged at table by the Falcon, who is marshall : the Stork being appointed steward during flesh-time ; and the Soland-Goose during the season of Lent, for this special reason, that from the firmament he could *fang the fische deid*. In the midst of the banquet, the Thrush, and some other birds, as minstrels, enter, and sing a hymn to the Virgin Mary ; which is followed by a curious list of musical instruments. The Jay, in the capacity of a juggler, is next introduced, who exhibits several wonderful exploits. He is succeeded by the Rook, in the character of a bard from Ireland, who begins to repeat an absurd rhapsody of the genealogy of the Irish Kings ; for which, and some other of his falsehoods, he is sharply rebuked. But his continued insolence and loquacity is checked by the entrance of the Lapwing and the Cuckoo, as two *flyrand* fools, who seize

on him, and pull him by the hair, and defile him so, that, to use the author's expressive words,

“ The bard smaddit lyke a smaik smorit in a smedy.”

After which, the two fools, to the great amusement of the company, fall by the ears, and abuse each other.—At length the council proceed to business, and the request contained in the Owl's petition is readily granted. They offer up their prayers to Dame Nature, who descends, and, willingly acceding to their united desires, bids each of the birds lend the Owl one of its feathers, which she engages to join together before her departure. This being done, the fortunate petitioner is suddenly changed from his despised shape, and becomes the fairest bird in all Scotland ; the transition, however, having the effect also of changing his behaviour to extreme haughtiness and arrogance, which at length become so intolerable, that the birds apply again to Nature for redress. She grants it, with the same condescension as formerly ; and the Owl, thus despoiled of all his borrowed plumage, and reduced to his original despised and deformed condition, gives vent to his feelings in several excellent moral reflections on the dangerous effects of pride. The author concludes with mentioning the cause of his writing

the poem, and the place where the adventure is said to have occurred.

Such is a brief outline of this fable, of the poetical merits of which, there can be but one opinion.¹⁰ Although

¹⁰ The following is the opinion of an ingenious writer, already named, with regard to Holland's merits as a poet:—

“To the character of an original inventor,” Mr Thomson says, “the author of the *Houlate* has but a slender claim; for besides having taken the story of his poem from the fable of the Jackdaw with borrowed feathers, he is indebted to *Chaucer's Assemble of Foules*, for some of its principal decorations. The catalogue of birds, and the personification of Nature, are, both of them, imitations of *Chaucer*; but the former is inferior, in every respect, to the characteristic sketches of his master; and the latter is so little suited to the situation in which it stands, as clearly shews it to have been an exotic, transplanted from a much more poetical soil.

“*Drayton* has a poem entitled the *Owl*; but there is no similarity between it and the *Houlate*, either in the subject, or the manner of treating it. But the want of propriety in this poem is a blemish still greater than that of originality. Nothing in composition can be more absurd, than the custom of investing birds and beasts with dignities ecclesiastical and civil; and putting dialogues into their mouths, upon moral, religious, or political topics. Perhaps, however, the candid reader may be inclined to think this more excusable in a writer of the fifteenth century, when he recollects that the very same impropriety was committed by the author of the *Hind* and *Panther*, almost at the close of the seventeenth.

“The adoption of *Mr Pinkerton's* hypothesis would furnish us with a still more striking coincidence (or rather contrast) between *Holland* and *Dryden*. The intention of the former in writing the *Houlate*, was to depreciate *James II.* of *Scotland*: to extoll *James II.* of *England*, and recommend his religion, was that of the latter. But the discovery of this allegorical meaning gives no fresh merit to the *Scottish* poem, as the satire in the one is equally unjust, and equally culpable, with the panegyric in the other.”—*MS. Critique on the Howlat*, p. 16, &c.

the details are occasionally amusing, it is still confessedly a dull performance, exhibiting, neither in conception nor execution, any extraordinary degree of poetical talent. But dull as the poem generally may be, there is a redeeming beauty in the episode of James, Lord of Douglas ; and it might be difficult to point out any similar passage in our old poetical writers, in which animated description is combined with so much tenderness and feeling. Moreover, the poem is remarkable for its language, no less than for its versification, in the structure of which, it bears a marked resemblance to some of the more ancient of our metrical romances ; although the style is neither so difficult nor so obscure as that of Gollagrus and Gawane, or of Raulf Coilyear, the romances more especially alluded to. If, after what has been stated, any reader is inclined to believe that this poem contains a covert satire on James II., with regard to his ambitious dispositions, he must at least concede, that the satire is not of the most pungent and caustick nature. But such a notion really derives little, if any, support from the poem itself, in which we can find no direct allusions either to the personal character of the King, or to the state of Scotland in his reign ; nor does the situation of James, at any period of his life, accord with that implied by the adoption of such an hypothe-

sis. Besides, the idea of the author's having made use of an allegorical fable for any such purpose, might be controverted on the grounds, that at that early period our writers had not resorted to such a mode of composition: they had, in fact, no experience of the power and extensive influence of political satire, which belongs to a much more advanced and polished state of society. On the whole, we may conclude with observing, that the author has displayed considerable ingenuity and descriptive power, and has preserved several curious sketches of the manners of the time; and that although the poem of *THE HOWLAT* is in some measure obscured by the unfortunate preference which has been given to the alliterative style that prevailed so much in our ancient poetical literature, it must nevertheless be always regarded as one of the most singularly curious productions of the age to which it belongs.

EDINBURGH, *Octoler* 1823.

SINCE the foregoing Preface was written, the Editor has been kindly favoured with the following communication from SIR WALTER SCOTT, which he is happy to have it in his power to present to the reader ; and which probably will satisfy most people on the point at issue :—

“ After the opinions entertained and expressed on the subject by great antiquaries, it may seem bold to doubt whether the *HOWLAT* contains any political allusion either to James II., or to the state of Scotland ; or, indeed, whether it means any thing more than a mere apologue, with such a fanciful adaptation of the characteristic and peculiarities of the various tribes of birds to the classes of mankind, as has been made in our own time in the witty and ingenious poem called “ *The Peacock at Home*, ”—the authoress of which, we will venture to say, never heard of Sir Richard Holland, or read a word of his *HOWLAT*, though the pieces bear a singular resemblance to each other. Another satire of the same kind appeared at Paris, about the beginning of the Revolution, in which the various orders of Catholic clergy are ludicrously classified, as birds, according to the system of Linnæus.

“The strong argument by which alone the general opinion has been hitherto supported, is, that the author, an avowed friend and eulogist of the great House of Douglas, must necessarily be an enemy of the reigning family, and willing to depress or insult the character of James II., as the enemy of his friends and patrons. To this we allow its full weight ; and if we could find in the piece, from beginning to end, any thing peculiarly allusive to the person of James II., or the events of his reign, we are ready to admit, that, arguing *a priori*, we should be apt to recognize such allusion as a libel on that prince, and as being a very natural appendage or corollary to a panegyric on the House of Douglas. If the poem had satirized pride or violence in oppression and abusion of power, as such faults would have corresponded with the charges which the Douglas faction had brought against the King : Or, suppose that James had been a Polish monarch, called to the throne by the suffrages of the nobles over whom he is afterwards accused of tyrannizing, the parable of the Howlat in his borrowed feathers would have been applicable, and the catastrophe of the apologue would have conveyed a striking inuendo. But James II. came to a hereditary throne in the ordinary course of succession ; and owed his sovereignty neither to the compassion and patronage of the “ Pape,” nor to

any special surrender of privileges on the part of the nobles. His authority was native to him, and he held the kingdom on the same terms on which his nobles held their estates, as the lawful owner of the throne of his ancestors. Indeed, it is particularly worthy of notice, that when the author mentions the King of Scotland distinctly, and by name, it is in his character of an independent and hereditary sovereign, giving the lie to his own satire, if we are to understand that he elsewhere likened James II. to the Owl in borrowed feathers.

‘ Our soverane of Scotland,
Quhilk sall be lord and ledar—
Our braid Britaine all quhar,
As Sanct Margaretis air.’

If it be alleged that this description is introduced merely as a device to conceal his satire, and screen the author from consequences, it may be replied, *First*, That in or about the year 1458, a friend of the House of Douglas, writing in the forest of Ternoway, at a time when general publication was out of the question, would probably have had little cause to dread the vengeance of his Sovereign. *Secondly*, That unless there be points of satirical resemblance which the lapse of ages may have obscured, it would never answer the purpose of a satirist to cover his

meaning so entirely, that when his production is read from one end to the other, no point of resemblance occurs between his libel and its object, which might not be equally applicable to any King and people of the period. It would be idle to express a positive opinion on a subject obscured by the mist of so many ages ; but until some coincidence is shewn, stronger than any which we are able to perceive betwixt the fable of the Howlat and the History of James II., we cannot but think it equally probable, that instead of writing a satire, HOLLAND amused his leisure at Ternoway by compiling a poetical apologue, upon a plan used not only by Chaucer, but by many of the French minstrels, without any view whatever to local or national politics. The praises of the Douglasses are introduced in an inartificial manner ; but such digressions are not uncommon in the authors of a rude age. The hymn to the virgin (Stanza LVI.) is just such an effusion of episodical devotion, as the panegyric on the Douglasses is a burst of friendly enthusiasm. Nay, the very circumstance, that they are brought forward without parable, or without disguise, seems to make against the opinion that there is a political allegory in the rest of the poem. Had the Douglas been introduced as the eagle or falcon, there would have been better reason to suppose that the King was sketched under the cha-

racter of the Howlat. On the whole, judging from the tenor of the poem and all that we know of the history of the period, we can only sum up with the remark, that if HOLLAND be actually a satirist, he has been one of the most cautious that ever wrote verse, since it is so hard to discover in what his satire consists ; or, in other words, he has hidden his meaning so completely, that it is impossible for a modern author distinctly to apprehend it."

THE following passage from Henry the old Scottish Minstrel,—the most romantick of all our ancient writers, had escaped my recollection when I was engaged in drawing up the foregoing preface ; but it is not too late to be brought forward as a corroborative proof of what is so clearly and satisfactorily stated in the above communication. There is to be found in it a most distinct reference to the poem of the HOWLAT, which is regarded as nothing more than a moral fable. This is the more curious, as it is contained in a work supposed to have been written about the year 1470, by one, who, if not personally acquainted with our author, was at least his contemporary. The lines occur in that part of the

minstrel's narrative, where he describes the contention which took place before the battle of Falkirk, when Sir William Wallace refused to yield up his accustomed post of honour, at the time that Stewart of Bute insisted on leading the vanguard of the army. Stewart upon this upbraids Wallace for pride, and addressing our valourous and immortal champion, says, "by thee I tell a tale."

" ' Say furth,' quoth he, ' off the farrest yhe can.'
 Wnhappyly his taill thus he began :—
 ' Wallace,' he said, ' thow takis the mekill cur ;
 So FERYT IT, BE WYRKYNG OFF NATUR,
 HOW A HOWLAT COMPLEND OF HIS FETHERAME,
 QUEHILL DEYM NATUR TUK OFF ILK BYRD, BUT BLAME,
 A FAYE FETHYE, AND TO THE HOWLAT GAIFF ;
 THAN HE THROUCH PRYD REBOYTTT ALL THE LAYFF.
 Quhar off suld thow thi senyhe schaw so he ?
 Thow thinkis nan her at suld thi falow be.
 This makis it, thow art cled with our men,
 Had we our awin, thin war bot few to ken.'

At thir wordis gud Wallace brynt as fyr :
 Our haistely he ansuerd him in ire,
 ' Thow leid,' he said, ' the suth full oft has ben,
 Thar, and I baid, quhar thow durst nocht be seyn
 Contrar enemys, na mar, for Scotlandis rycht
 Than dar the HOWLAT quhen that the day is brycht.' "

WALLACE,—BY HENRY THE MINSTREL.—*Buke X. 130, &c.*

The Duke of the Howlat.

Heir begynnis
The Buke of the Howlat.

I.

In the myddis of May, at morne, as I ment,
Threwe myrth markit on mold, till a grene meid,
The hemes blythest of hie fro the son blent,
That all brichtnyt about the bordouris on breid :
With alkyn herbes of air that war in erd lent
The feldis flourish, and fret full of fairhed ;
So soft was the seshoun our Souerane downe sent,
Threwe the greable gift of his Godhed,
That all was ampyable ower the air and the erd :
Thus, threwe thir cliftis so cleir,
Withouthin fallowe or feir,
I raisit till ans Reveir, That ryally apperid.



III.

This riche Revir down ran, but resting or ruf,
 Throue ane forest on fold, that farly was fair ;
 All the brayis of the brym baie branchis abus,
 And birdis blythest of ble, on blossomes baie ;
 The land lowne was and le, with lyking and luf,
 And for to lende by that laike, thocht me leuar,
 Becaus that thir hartes in heirdis couth huf,
 Pransand and prunzeand, be pair and be pair :
 Thus sat I in solace, sekerly and sure,
 Content of the fair firth,
 Mекle maie of the mirth,
 Als blyth of the birth That the ground bure.

III.

The birth that the ground bure was browdin on breidis,
 With gits gape as the gold, and granes of grace,
 Mendis and medicyne for mennis all neidis ;
 Helpe to hert, and to hurt, heilfull it was.
 Undir the Cirkill solar thir saucous seidis
 War nurist be dame Natur, that noble maistres ;
 Bot all thar names to nebyn as now, it nocht neid is,
 It war prokret and lang, and lenthing of space,
 And I haue mekle matie in metie to glos,
 Of ane nothir sentence
 And wakke is my eloquence ;
 Charfor in haist will I hens To the purpos.

III.

Of that purpos in the place, be pryme of the day,
 I herd ane petuos appele, with ane pur mane,
 Solpit in sorowe, that sadly couth say,
 Alas is me, wretche in this world, willsome of wane,
 With mair murnyng in mynd than I meyne may,
 Rolpit reuthfully roth in a rude rane ;
 Of that ferly on fold, I fell in affray,
 Nixar that noys in nest I necht in ane
 I sawe ane Howlat, in haist, undir ane holyne,
 Lukand the lakke throwe,
 And saw his awne schadowe,
 At the quhill he couth growe, And maid gowlyne.

IV.

He grat gryfly grym, and gait a gret zotole,
 Cheuerand and chyband with churliche cheir :
 Duby is my far, quoth the fyle, fassonit so foule,
 My forme and my fetherem, vncrely, but feir ;
 My neb is netherit as a nok, I am hot ane Owle ;
 Aganis natur in the nicht, I walk in to weir ;
 I dare do nocht on the day, bot droupe as a doole,
 Nocht for schame of my schape in pert till appeir :
 Thus all thir fowlis, for my filth, has me at feid,
 That be I seyne in thar sight,
 To luke out on day licht,
 Sum will me dulkfully dight, Sum dyng me to deid.

III.

Sum biid will bay at my beike, and some will me byte,
 Sum skripe me with scorne, sum skrym at myn e ;
 I se be my schadowe my schape has the wyte :
 Quhom sall I blame in this breth, a bysoun that I be,
 Is nane bot dame Natur I bid nocht to myte,
 Till ' accuse ' of this cause, in case that I de ;
 Bot quha sall mak me ane mendis of hir worth a myte,
 That thus has maid on the mold ane monstour of me :
 I will appele to the Pape, and pas till him plane ;
 For happin that his halynace,
 Throo prayer may purchase,
 To reforme my soule face, And than war I fane.

III.

Fayne wald I wyte, quoth the fyle, or I furth fure,
 Quha is fader of all foule, pastour and pape ;
 That is the plesant Pacok, precious and pure,
 Constant and kirklyk vnder his cler cape,
 Myterit, as the maner is, manswet and mure,
 Schroude in his schene weid, schand in his schap,
 Sad in his sanctitud, sekerly and sure,
 I will go to that gud, his grace for to grap.
 Of that bourde I was blythe and bade to behald,
 The Howlet wylest in wyre,
 Raikit vnder the rys,
 To the Paroke of pryce, That was Pape cald.

III.

Before the Pape, quhen the put present him had,
 With sic courtasly as he couth, on kneis he fell ;
 Said Aue Mary, be the rud I am richt rad
 For to behald your halynes, or my tale tell ;
 I may nocht suffys to se your sanctitud sad.
 The Pape wyllie I wis, of worschipe the well,
 Gaff him his braid beneloun, and baldly him had,
 That he suld spedely speke and spair nocht to spell.
 I come to speir, quoth the spreit, in to speciall,
 Duby I am formed so fowle,
 Ay to zowt and to zowle,
 As an horrible Dwle,

Alsum our all.

IV.

I am netherit ane Dwll thus be Natur,
 Lykar a fule than a fowle in figur and face ;
 By syn of all birdis that euer body bure,
 Withouthin caus or ceyn, kend in this case :
 I haue appellit to your presence, precious and put,
 Askis helpe in till haist at your halynes,
 That ze wald cry apon Crist, that all has in cur,
 To schape me a schand bled in a schoot space ;
 And till accus Natur, this is no nay ;
 Thus, throw your halynes, may ze
 Make a fair foule of me,
 Or elles dredles I de

Or myne end day.

E.

Of thi deid, quoth the Pape, pite I haife,
Bot apou Natur to pleyne, it is perrell ;
I can nocht say subanelye, so me Crist saif,
Bot I sall call my cardinallis and my counsall,
Patriarkis and prophetis of Ierit the laif ;
Thay salbe semblit full sone, that thow se sall.
He callit on his cubicular within his conclaif,
That was the proper Pape Iaye proude in his apparale ;
Bad send for his secretar, and his sele sone,
That was the Curtour trewest,
Ferme, faithfull, and fast,
That bure that office honest, And enterit but hone.

EJ.

The Pape commandit but hone, to wryte in all landis,
Be the said secretar, that the sele zempt,
For all statis of kirk that wonder Crist standis,
To semble to his summondis, as it wele sempt.
The trewe Curtour has tane with the tythandis,
Done dewlie his det, as the deir dempt ;
Syne helyf send the letteris in to seir landis
With the Swallowe, so swyft in special expremit
The Papis harrauld, at poynt in to present,
For he is forthwart to fle,
And ay will haue entre,
In hous and in hall hie, To tell his entent.

¶ III.

What suld I tell ony mair of thir materis,
 Bot thir lordis help the letteris has tane,
 Resauit thaim with reuerence, to reid as effectis ;
 And richely the harcaldis rewardit ilkane,
 Than busk thaj but blyn, mony bewschyris,
 Grathis thaim but gruching that gait for to gane.
 All the statis of the kirk out of feild stieris,
 And I sall not zow richt now thar names in ane,
 How thaj apperit to the Pape, and present thaim ay
 Fair farrand and fre,
 In a gudly degre,
 And manlyke as thocht me, In myddis of May.

¶ IIII.

All thus in May, as I ment, in a motynng,
 Come four falsandis full fair in the first front,
 Present thaim as patriarchis in thar appering,
 Benyng of obedience, and blyth in the bront :
 A college of cardinalis come syne in a lynn,
 That war Crannis of kynd, gif I richt compt ;
 With red hattis on hed, in haile takynning
 Off that deir dignite, with worlchipe ay wont :
 Thir ar fowlis of effect, but fellony or feid,
 Spirituale in all thing,
 Leile in thar leving,
 Charfor in dignite digne, Thay dure to thar deid.

XC.

3it endurand the daye to that dese drewe,
 Swannis swoychand full swoyth, sweetest of swar,
 In quhyte vocatis arrayd ; as I right knewe
 That thaj war bischopis bliss, I was the blythar ;
 Stable and steidfast, tender and trewe,
 Off feire wordis, full wys, and worthy thaj war :
 Char was Pyotis, and Partrikis, and Plutaris pnewe,
 As abbotis of all ordouris that honorable ar ;
 The Se Hawis war monkis, the blak and the quhyte,
 The Goule was a gryntar,
 The Suerthbak a sellarar,
 The Scarth a silche sengar, And that a percyte.

XCI.

Parcytlye thir Pikmaris, as for pcuris,
 With thar party habitis present tham thar ;
 Heronnis contemplatif, clene characteris,
 With toppit hudis on hed, and clothing of hair,
 Ay sorowfull and sad at evn sang and houris,
 Was neuer leid saw thaim lauch, bot droopand and dar ;
 Alkyn chennonis ilk of vther ordouris,
 All maner of religioun, the less and the mare ;
 Cryand Crawis and Cais, that cravis the corne,
 War pure freeris forthward,
 That with the leif of the lard,
 Will cum to the corne yard At ewyn and at morn.

XCII.

Zit or wygn enterit come that but office,
 Obyand thir bishoppis, and bydand tham by,
 Gret Ganeris on ground, in gudly awys,
 That war demyt, but dowt, denys deuchty ;
 Thaj war residence raith, and aithly will ryle
 To kepe the college cleine, and the clergye.
 The Lok in his cleir cape, that crawis and cryis,
 Was chosyn chauntour full cheif in the channonry.
 Thar come the Curlewe a clerk, and that full cunnand,
 Chargit as chancillar,
 For he couth wryte wonder fast,
 With his neb for mistar, Apon the se sand.

XCIII.

Apon the sand zit I sawe, as thesaurer tane,
 With grene almous on hed, schir Sawane the Drak ;
 The archedene, that ourman, ay prechand in plane,
 Correkter of kirkmen was clept the Clak.
 The Hartoun, the Hurcoke, the Wyresnype in ane,
 Lichtit, as lexit men, law by that lakke.
 The Ravyne, rolpand rudly in a roche ran,
 Was bene rurale to reid, rank as a ratke ;
 Dubill the lardnir was laid, held he na hous ;
 Bot in toplandis townis,
 At vicaris and persounis,
 For the procuraciounis, Cryand full crows.

XCIII.

The croys Capone, a clerk vnder cleir weidis,
 Full of cheryte, chaff, and vchangeable,
 Was officiale but les that the law leidis
 In caussis consistoriale, that ar courtable.
 The Sparrowe Menus he wesit for his vyle deidis,
 Lyand in lichory, laith, vnloveable.
 The Feldiser in the forest, that febilly him feidis
 Be ordour ane hospitular was ordanit full able.
 The Cowleshotis war personis in thar apparale.
 The Dow Noyis messinger,
 Rowmand aye with his felt,
 Was a corate to heir Confessionis hale.

XCIV.

Confes cleir can I nocht, nor kyth all the case,
 The kynd of thar cummyng, thar companyis eike ;
 The maner, nor the multitud, so mony thar was :
 All Se fotole, and Seid fotole, was nocht for to seik.
 Thir ar na fotolis of reis, nor of richnes,
 Bot mansweil, but malice, manerit and meike,
 And all apperit to the Pape, in that ilk place,
 Salust his sanctitud with spirituale speike.
 The Pape gaf his benesoun, and blissit thaim all.
 Duben thaj war rangit on rawis
 Of thar come, the haile caus
 Was said in to schoot sawis, As ze heir fall.

XX.

The Pape said to the Diule, Propone thin appele,
 Thy lamentable langage, as lykis the best.
 I am deformed, quoth the fyle, with saltis full felle,
 Be Nature netherit ane Diule noyus in nest,
 Wrecche of all wretchis, fra worchipe and wele ;
 All this trecty has he tald be termes in test :
 It neidis nocht to renewe all myn vnhcle,
 Sen it was mentit to your mynd, and maid manifest.
 Bot to the poynt petuos he prayit the Pape
 To call the clergy with cure,
 And se gif that Nature
 Mycht reform his figour In a fair schaipe.

XXI.

Than fairlie the fader thir fowlis he frangt
 Of that counsall in this cais, sen the richt thaj knewe ;
 Gif thaj the howlat mycht helpe, that was so hard paynit ?
 And thaj weraly awysit, full of wretewe,
 The maner, the mater, and how it remanyt ;
 The circumstance, and the stat, all couth thaj argewe.
 Hony allegiance leile, in leid nocht to layne it,
 Of Aristotill, and ald men, scharplie thaj schewe ;
 The Prelatis thar apperans proponit generale ;
 Sum said to, and sum fra,
 Sum nay, and sum ya,
 Baith pro and contra Thus argewe thaj all.

XXX.

Thus argewe thaj ernikly wounder oftlys ;
 Syne ' to the ' samyn forluth thaj assent haile ;
 That sen it necht Natur, thar alleris mastris,
 Thaj couth nocht trete but entent of the Temperale.
 Tharfor thaj counsall the Pape to writ in this wys,
 To the Athile emperour, souerane in saile,
 To adres to that dyet, to deme his awys,
 With dukis, and with digne lordis, darrest in dale,
 Erles of ancestry, and vtharis ynewe.
 So that the Spirituale staite,
 And the secular consait,
 Wyght all gang in a gait Tender and trewe.

XXXI.

The trewe Curtour and traist, as I er tauld,
 Wrait thir letteris at lenth, lelest in leid ;
 Syne throw the Papis precept planly thaim zald
 To the Swallowe so swyft, harrauld in hed,
 To etill to the emperour, of ancestry auld :
 He wald nocht spair for to spring on a gud spreid :
 Fand him in Babilonis towre, with bernis so bald,
 Cruell kingis with crowne, and dukis but dreid.
 He gaf thir lordis helype the letteris to luke ;
 Quhilk the riche emperour,
 And all vthar in the hour,
 Resaunt with honour, Baith princis and duke.

XXX.

Duben thaj consault had the rais, and the credence,
 Be the harrald in hall hove thaj nocht ellis,
 Bot downis out of Babulone with all obediens,
 Sekkis our the salt se, fro the south sellis,
 Enteris in Europe, fre but offens,
 Wallis wyllie the wayis, be woddis and wellis,
 Duhill thaj approche to the Pape in his presens,
 At the forsaide trist quhar the trete tellis.
 Thaj fand him in a forrest, frely and fair :
 Thaj halit his halynas ;
 And ze sall heir in schort space,
 Duhat worthy lordis thar was, Gif your willis war.

XXXI.

Thar was the Egill so grym, grettest on ground is,
 Athill emperour our all, most awfull in erd.
 Ernes ancient of air kingis that crownd is,
 Nixt his celsitud forluth secoundlie apperd ;
 Duhilk in the firmament throuch foris of thar sight foundis,
 Perles the sone, with thar sight selcouth to herd.
 Geir Falconnis, that gentilly in bewte haboundis,
 War deir dukis, and digne, to deme as esserd.
 The Falcone, farrest on sight formed on fold,
 Was an eill of honour,
 Marschell to the emperour,
 Boith in hall and in bowr, Hende to behold.

XXX.

Gois Halkis war governouris of the gret oist,
 Chosin chistanis, chevalrus in charge of weris,
 Marchonis in the mapamond, and of mychtis most,
 Dirst dukis in dignite, quhom no dreid deris.
 Spar Halkis, that spedely will compas the cost,
 War kene knyghtis, of kynd clene of maneris,
 Wlyth bodyit, and held, but bareit or hoist,
 With eyne celestiale to se, circultit as saphiris.
 The Specht was a pursavant, provde till apper ;
 That raid befor the emperour,
 In a cot 'of' armour,
 Of all kynd of colour, Cumly and cleir.

XXXI.

He bure cumly to knawe be connyssaunce cleir
 Thre crowns, and a crucifix, all of cler gold ;
 The burde with orient perle plantit till apper,
 Dicht as a dyademe digne, desir to behold,
 Circultit on ilk syde with the saphir,
 The jaspis joynt in gem, and rubyis in rold.
 Syne twa keyis our croce, of siluer so cleir,
 In a feld of asure flammis on sold ;
 The Papis armes at poynt to blason and heir.
 As feris for a persewannt,
 That will wayage awant ;
 Active and atenant, Armes to weir.

XXXIII.

Syne in a feild of fluer, secoundlie he beris,
 Ane Egill ardent of air, that etlis so hie ;
 The memberis of the samyn coull displait as effris,
 Ferme formyt on fold, ay set for to fle ;
 All of sable the self, quha the suth lers,
 The beke hypertit breame of that ilk ble :
 The Emprour of Almane the armes he weris,
 As signifier souerane : And syne couth I se
 Thre flour delycis of Fraunce, all of fyne gold,
 In a feild of asure,
 The thrid armes in honour,
 The said perseverant bure That bloutit so bold.

XXX.

Charwith lynkit in a lyng, be lert men approvit,
 He bure a lyon as lord, of gotolis full gay,
 Gaid maskles of mycht, on mold quhar he movit,
 Riche rampand as rope, ryke of array :
 Of pure gold was the ground, quhar the grym hovit,
 [With dowble tressour about, flourit in fay ;
 And flour delycis on lost, that mony leid lovit,]
 Of gotolis lygnit, and set, to schawe in assay ;
 Our souerane of Scotland his armes to knawe,
 Dubilk sall be lord and lebar,
 Our braid Brettane all quhar,
 As sanct Margarethis air, And the signe schawe.

XXX.

Next the souerane signe was sekirly sene,
 That seruit his serenite euer seruable,
 The armes of the Dowglas douchty hedene,
 Knawin throw all Cristindome be conspance able ;
 Of Scotland the wer wall, wit ze but wene,
 Our fais force to defend, and unfalzeable ;
 Baith harmekyn and bar to Scottis blud bene,
 Our lois, and our lyking, that lyne honorable.
 That word is so wonder warne, and euer zit was,
 It synkis sone in all part
 Of a trewe Scottis hart,
 Resoland ws inwart To heir of Dowglas.

XXXI.

Off the douchty Dowglas to dyte I me dres ;
 That armes of ancestry honorable ay,
 Quhilk oft blythit the Bruse in his distres,
 Charfor he blisfit that blud bald in assay.
 Reid the writ of that werk, to your witnes,
 Furth on my matir to muse I muse as I may.
 The said persevantis gyde was grathit I ges,
 Brusit with ane grene tre, gudly and gay ;
 That bure branchis on breid blythest of hewe ;
 On ilk beugh till embrace,
 Writtin in a bill was,
 O Dowglas, O Dowglas, Tendir and trewe !

XXXX.

Spne schir schapyn to schawe, mony schene scheld
 With tuscheis of trast ilk ticht to the tre ;
 Ik branche had the birch burly and beld,
 Four flourist our all grettest of gre.
 Ane in the crope heigh, as cheif I beheld,
 Duhilk bure in till asure, blythest of ble,
 Siluer sternis so fast ; and part of the feld
 Was siluer, set with ane hert, heirly and hie,
 Of gotolis full gracious, that glemyt so gay :
 Spne in asure the mold,
 A lyoun crownt with gold,
 Of siluer ze se shold, To ramp in array.

XXXX.

Duhilk cassyn be cognosceunce quarterly was,
 With harris of best gold it brynt as the fyr ;
 And uthir signes, forluth syndry I ges,
 Of metallis and colouris in tentfull atyre.
 It was tyrefull to tell, dyte, or addres,
 All thar deir armis in dewolpe desyre.
 Bot part of the principale neuertheles
 I sall haist me to hewe hartlie but hyre.
 Char lois and thar lordschipe of sa lang dait,
 That bene cot armouris of eild,
 Charin to harrauld I held ;
 Bot sen thaj the Brus held, I wryt as I wait.

XXXII.

In the takynnyng of treuth, and constance kend,
 The colour of asure, and hevinliche gewer,
 For thj to the Dowglas that senze was send,
 As lelest, all Scotland fra scaith to reskewe.
 The siluer in the samyn half, trewly to tend,
 Is cleir corage in armes, quha the richt knewe.
 The bludy hart that thaj bere the Brus at his end,
 With his estate in the steid, and nobillis ynewe,
 Addit in thar armes, for honorable caus,
 As his tenderest and deir,
 In his maist misteir ;
 As salbe said to thow heir In to schort sawis.

XXXIII.

The rope Robert the Brus the rayke he awowit,
 With all the hart that he had, to the haily graif ;
 Syne quhen the daif of his deid deefly him dowit,
 With lordis of Scotland, lexit, and the laif,
 As worthy, wylest to waile, in worschipe allowit,
 To James lord ' of ' Dowglas thow the gre gaif,
 To ga with the kingis hart ; thairwith he nocht growit ;
 Bot said to his souerane, So me God saif !
 Your gret giftis and grant ay gracious I fand ;
 Bot now it movis all ther maist,
 That your hart nobillast
 To me is cloist and cast, Throw your command.

XXXIIJ.

I loue you maite for that loiss ze kippyn me till,
 Than ony lordschipe or land, so me our Lord leid !
 I sall waynd for no weye to wick as ze will,
 At wis, gif my werd wald, with zou to the deid.
 Char with he lowtit full lawe : tham lykit full ill,
 Baith lordis and ladyis, that stude in the stude.
 Off commoun nature the cours be kynd to fulfill.
 The gud king gaif the gaif to God for to reid ;
 In Cardros that crownit closit his end.
 Now God for his gret grace,
 Set his saull in solace !
 And we will speike of Dowglace, Duhat way he couth wend.

XXXIIJ.

The hert costlye he couth clos in a cler race,
 And held all hale the behest he hecht to the king :
 Come to the haly graf, throw Goddis gret grace,
 With offerandis, and vrisons, and all vthar thing ;
 Our Saluatouris sepulture, and the samyn place,
 Duhar he rais, as we reid, richtwis to ryng ;
 With all the relykis raith, that in that roume was,
 He gart hallowe the hart, and syne couth it hyng,
 About his hals full hende, and on his awne hart.
 Offt wald he kiss it, and cry,
 O flour of all chewalry !
 Duhy leif I, allace ! quhy And thow deid art !

XXXIII.

My deir, quoth the Dotoglas, art thou deid dicht ?
My singuler souerane, of Saxonis the wand !
Now hot I semble for thi saull with Sarazenis mycht,
Sall I neuer sene be into Scotland ;
Thus in defence of the faith he fure to the fecht,
With knyghtis of Christindome to kepe his command.
And quhen the batallis so brym, brathly and bricht,
War joyned thraly in thrang, mony thousand ;
Amang the bethin men the hert, hardely he sang,
Said, Wend on, as thou was wont,
Throw the batell in bront ;
Aye formaist in the front, Thy sayis amang.

XXXIV.

And I sall followe the in faith, or feye to be fellit ;
As thi lege man leile, my lyking thou art.
Thar with on Mahowonis men manly he mellit,
Braid throw the battallis in bront, and bur thaim backward.
The wyis quhar the wicht went war in wa wellit ;
Was nane so sur in the steid nicht stand him a start.
Thus frayis he the fals folk, trewly to tell it,
Aye quhil he couerit and come to the kingis hart.
Thus feile feildis he wan, aye worchipand it.
Throwout Cristindome kid
War the deidis that he did :
Till on a time it betid, As tellis the writ.

FL.

He downyt till a batall, and the held wan,
Dur set all the sathanas hyde Sarazenis mycht :
Synne followit fast on the chace, quhen thaj se can,
Full ferly feile has he feld, and flane in the sight.
As he releuit I wis, so was he war than,
Of ane wy him allane, worthy and wicht,
Circulit with Sarazenis, mony ' a ' sad man,
That traoupyntit with a trayne apoun that trewe knyght.
Thow sall nocht be the allane, quoth the Dowglas !
Sen I se the our set,
To fecht for the faith fete,
I sall deuoid the of det, Or be in the place.

FLJ.

He ruscht in the gret rowte, the knyght to reskewe,
Feile of the fals folk, that fled of befor,
Releit in on this twa, for to tell trewe,
That thaj war samyn ourset ; tharfor I murn sore.
Thus in defence of the faith, as fermez ynewe,
And pite of the prys knyght that was in thore,
The dourhty Dowglas is deid and adewe,
With los and with lyking, that lestis evir mor.
His hardy men take the hart syne vpon hand :
Quhen thaj had berpit thar lord,
With mekle mane to remord,
Thaj maid it hame be restord In to Scotland.

XXX.

Next the souerane signe was sekirly sene,
That seruit his serenite euer seruable,
The armes of the Dowglas douchty bedene,
Knatwain throw all Cristkindome be conspance able ;
Of Scotland the wer wall, wit ze but wene,
Our fais force to defend, and unfaizeable ;
Baith barmekyn and bar to Scottis blud bene,
Our lois, and our lyking, that lyne honorable.
That word is so wonder warne, and euer zit was,
It synkis sone in all part
Of a trewe Scottis hart,
Reisland ws inwart To heir of Dowglas.

XXXI.

Of the douchty Dowglas to dyte I me dres ;
That armes of ancestry honorable ay,
Quhilk oft blythit the Bruse in his distres,
Tharfor he blissit that blud bald in assay.
Reid the writ of thar werk, to your witnes,
furth on my matir to muse I muse as I may.
The said perseverantis gyde was grathit I ges,
Brusit with ane grene tre, gudly and gay ;
That hure branchis on breid blythest of hewe ;
On ilk beugh till embrace,
Writtin in a bill was,
O Dowglas, O Dowglas, Tendir and trewe !

FLA.

The lyon lanchand on loft, lord in effeir,
 For gud caus, as I ges, is of Gallaway.
 Quhen thaj rebellit the crowne ; and couth the king deir,
 He gais it to the Dowglas, heretable ay :
 On this toys gif he couth wyn it on weir ;
 Dubilk for his souerane sake he set till assay ;
 Kellit downe thar capitans, and couth it conquest ;
 Gaid it firme, as we fynd, till our Scottis fay.
 Tharfor the lyoun he bure, with loving and loir,
 Of siluer semely and sure,
 In a field of asure,
 Crownit with gold pure, To the purpos.

FLA.

The forest of Ettrik, and vthair ynetwe,
 The landis of Lawdir, and lordschipsis lere,
 With dynt of his deir sword, the Dowglas so dewe,
 Man wichtly of weir, wit the but weir,
 Fra sonnis of the Saronis. Now gif I sall schewe
 The order of thar armis, it war to tell teir ;
 The barris of best gold that thaj hale knewe
 It suld us occupy all day ; tharfor I end heir,
 Referris me to harrairdis, to tell zow the hale.
 Of other scheldis, so schene,
 Sum part will I mene,
 That war on the tre grene, Worthy to wale.

FLIII.

Secund syne, in a feld of siluer, certane,
 Of a kynde colour thre coddis I kend
 With dowble tressur about, buerly and bane,
 And flour delycis so fair trewe till attend.
 The tane and the tother of gotwis full gane,
 He bure quarterly, maid that nane might amend ;
 The armes of the Dowglas, thatrof was I sayne ;
 Dubilk aft fandit with force, his fa till offend :
 Of honorable ancestrey thir armis of eld
 Bure the erll of Murray,
 As sad signe of assay,
 His fell fais till affray, In a fair feild.

FLIIII.

Ane nothir, erll of Demond, also he bure
 The said Dowglas armis, with a differens.
 And richt so did the ferd, quhar he furth fure ;
 Zaipe thocht he zong was, to saynd his offens.
 It sempt that thaj sib war forluth I assure.
 Thir four scheldis of peyce in to presence
 War chenzet so cheualrus, that no creatur
 Of lokis nor lynx, mycht lous worth a lence.
 Syne ilk braunche, and heugh, ' howit ' thaim till :
 And ilk scheld in that place
 Char tennend or man was,
 Or ellis thar allyas, At thar awin will.

FLIII.

All thir hieast in the crope four helmes full fair,
 And in that tymetallis tryd, trewly thaj here,
 The plesand Powne in a part, provde to repair ;
 And als kept ilk armes that I said er,
 The rough Godwys wold, that bassounis bare,
 Our growin gryfly and growe grym in effeir ;
 Haie awfull in all thing saw I never air
 Baith to walk, and to ward, as watchis in weir :
 That terrible felloun my spreit affrayd,
 So ferd full of fantasy,
 I durst nocht kyth to opp
 All othir armes thar by, . Of renkis arayd.

FLII.

Charfor of the said tre I tell nocht the tepnd,
 The birch, and the branchis, that blomyt so brayd :
 Quhat fele armes on loft, lowely to lend,
 Of lordingis and sere landis, gudly and glad,
 The said persewanant bure, quhar he away wend,
 On his garment so gay, of ane hie haib,
 I left thaim blasonde to be with harcaldis hende ;
 And I will to my first mater, as I er maid ;
 And begyn, quhar I left, at lordingis deir,
 The court of the Emprour,
 How thaj come in honour,
 Thir fowlis of rigour, With a gret reir.

L.

Than recit thir Herlezeonis that mountis so hie,
 Furth borne bachelers bald on the bordouris ;
 Busardis, and Beldkypis, as it mycht be,
 Soldiouris and sumptermen to thaj senzeouris.
 The Pitill and the Pypp Gled cryand petewe
 Befor thir princis ay past, as pert purviouris,
 For thaj couth chewis chikinnis, and perches pultre,
 To cleke fra the commonis, as kyngis captouris ;
 Syne hufe hover, and behald the herbery place.
 Robyn Redbreest nocht ran,
 Bot raid as a hensman ;
 And the litill we, *W*eran . That wretchit dorch was.

LJ.

That was the haraldis fa the hobby but fable,
 Stanchalis, steropis, strecht to thaj stern lordis,
 With alkyn officeris in erd, awenand and able ;
 So mekle was the multitud no mynd it remordis.
 Thus assemblit thir legis, loris senzeourable,
 All that war fowlis of reif, the richt quha recordis,
 For the Temperalite tretit in table,
 The stern Emprouris stile thus staitly restord is.
 The Pape, and the patriackis, prelatis, I wiff,
 Welcummit thaim wonly, but weir,
 With haly sermonis seir,
 Pardoun, and prayer, And blythly tham bliff.

LIII.

The bliffit Pape in the place prayit tham ilkane
To remayne to the meit, at the mydday ;
And thaj grantit that gud, but gruching, to gane :
Than till a wortheliche wane went thaj thar way ;
Past till a palace of pryce plesand allane,
Was erekit rially, ryke of array,
Pantit and apparalit proudly in pane,
Sylit semely with silk, suthly to say.
Braid burdis, and benkis, ourbeld with bancouris of gold,
Cled our with clene clathis,
Raillit full of richas,
The eliait was arras That ze se schold.

LIII.

All thus thaj muse to the meit : and the merchale
Gart bring watter to welche, of a well cleir :
That was the Falconne so fair, frely but fale
Bad birnis burdis vp braid, with a blyth cheir.
The Pape passit till his place, in his pontificale,
The athill Emptour anone necht him neir.
Kyngis, and patriarchis, kend with cardinalis hale,
Addressit thaim to that deis, and dukis so deir.
Bischopis bobnis to the burd, and merchionis of mychtis ;
Erllis of honouris,
Abbotis of ordouris,
Prowestis and prouris, And mony kene knyghtis.

LIII.

Denys, and digniteis, as I er demyt,
 Scrutiferis, and squyperis, and bachilleris blyth :
 I pres nocht all to report ; ze hard thaim expremit ;
 Bot all war merchalit to meist meikly and myth :
 Syne seruit semely in saile, forluth as it sempt,
 With all curis of cost that cukis couth kyth.
 In flesche tyme, quhen the filche war away stempt,
 Duha was stewart bot the Stork, stallwart and styth :
 Syne all the lentreyne but leis, and the lang reid,
 And als in the adwent,
 The Soland stewart was sent ;
 For he couth fro the firmament fang the filche deid.

LIIII.

The Boptour callit was cuke, that him weile kend
 In craftis of the ketchyne, coslyk of curis.
 Many sawouris sals with sewaris he send,
 And confectionis on force that phisik furth furis.
 Mony man metis, gif I suld mak end,
 It neidis nocht to renewe all thar naturis ;
 Duha sic statis will stete, thar stylis till ostend,
 Ze wait all worchyp and welth dayly induris.
 Syne, at the myddis of the meist, in come the menstralis,
 The Havis and the Herle syngis,
 Dillis, and Stirlingis,
 The blyth Lark that begynnis, And the Nyctingales.

LIII.

And that notis anone, gif I richt newyne,
War of Mary the myld ; this maner I wis ;
Haile temple of the Trinite, crownit in hevin !
Haile moder of our maker, and medicyn of mys !
Haile succour and salp for the synnis sevyne !
Haile bute of our baret, and held of our blis !
Haile grane full of grace that growis so riyn !
Ferme our seid to the set quhar thj son is.
Haile lady of all ladyis, lichtest of leme !
Haile chalmre of chastite !
Haile charbunkle of cherite !
Haile ! blisset mot thow be For thj barne teme.

LIII.

Haile blisset throw the bodword of blyth Angellis !
Haile princes that completis all prophetis pur !
Haile blythar of the Baptist, within thj bowallis,
Off Elizabeth thj ant, aganis natur !
Haile speciose most specifyit with the spiritualis !
Haile ordant or Adam, and ay till indur !
Haile our hope, and our helpe, quhen that harme allis !
Haile alterar of Eva in ane but vre !
Haile well of our weillfare ! we wait nocht of ellis ;
Bot all committis to the,
Saul and Iyf, ladye !
Now for thj frute make us fre, fro fendis that sell is.

LIII.

Fro thj gre to this ground lat thj grace glyde !
As thow art grantar tharof, and the gebar ;
Now souerane gubar thow sittis, be thj sonis syd,
Send sum succour doone sone to the synnir !
The sende is our felloun fa, in the we confide,
Thow moder of all mercy, and the menar.
For ws wappit in wo in this world wyde,
To thj son mak thj mane and thj maker.
Now lady luke to the leid that the so leile lufis,
Thow seker trone of Salamon,
Thow worthy wand of Aaron,
Thow joyus sleis of Gedion, Als help the behufis.

LIIII.

All thus our lady thaj lovit, with lykng and lyst,
Gentralis, and musicianis, mo than I mene may.
The psaltery, the lytholis, the soft lytharist,
The crowde, and the monycordis, the gittynis gay ;
The rote, and the recordour, the ribupe, the rist,
The trumpe, and the talburn, the tympane but trap ;
The lilt pype, and the lute, the lydill in list,
The dulset, the dullacordis, the schalme of assay ;
The ampyable organis vst full oft ;
Claryonis lowde knellis,
Portatuis, and bellis,
Cymbaclanis in the cellis, That soundis so soft.

LX.

Duhen thaj had songyn, and said, softly and schour ;
And playit, as of paradys, it a poynt war ;
In com japand the Ja, as a juglour,
With castis, and with catwells, a quaynt caryar :
He gart thaim se, as it semyt, in the samyn hour,
Hunting at herdis, in holtis so hair ;
Sound saland on the se schippis of towr ;
Bernes batalland on burde, brym as a hair ;
He couth cary the cotwe of the kingis des,
Synne leve in the sted
Bot a blak bunwed ;
He couth of a hennis hed Make a mane mes.

LXI.

He gart the Emprour trowe, and trewly behald,
That the Corne Crake, the pundar at hand,
Had pyndit all his prys hors in a pundfald,
For caus thaj ete of the corne in the kirkland.
He couth werk wonderis quhat way that he wald :
Make of a gray gus a gold garland ;
A lang speer of a betill for a berne bald ;
Robillis of nut schellis, and siluer of sand.
Thus jowkit with juperdys the jangland Ja :
Fair ladyis in ryngis,
Knyghtis in caralyngis,
Boith dandis and syngis ; It semyt as sa.

LEII.

Sa come the Ruke with a reed, and a cane roch,
 A hard owt of Ireland with Banachadee !
 Said, Gluntow guk dynyd dach hala mischy doch ;
 Raske hie a rug of the rost, or scho sall ryiue the.
 Wich marmory ach mach momette moch loch ;
 Set hie downe, gif hie drink ; quhat Dele alis the ?
 O Derempe, O Donnall, O Dochardy droch ;
 Thir ar his Ireland kingis of the Irischerpe :
 O Knewlyn, O Conochor, O Gregre Makgrane ;
 The Schenachy, the Clarschach,
 The Ben schene, the Ballach,
 The Crekery, the Corach, Scho kennis thaim ilkane.

LEIII.

Hony lesingis he maid ; wald let for no man
 To speik quhill he spokin had, sparit no thingis.
 The dene rurale, the Ravyne, reprovit him than,
 Bad him his lesingis leif befor thaj lordingis.
 The harde worth brane wod, and bitterly couth ban,
 How Corby messinger, quoth he, with sorowe now syngis ;
 Thow ischit out of Noyses ark, and to the erd wan,
 Caryit as a tratour, and brocht na tythingis ;
 I sall ryiue the, Ravyne, baith guttis and gall.
 The dene rurale worthit reid,
 Stawe for schame of the staid.
 The harde held a grete pleid In the hie hall.

LEII.

In come twa flyrand fulis with a sonde fair,
The Tuchet; and the gukkit Golk, and zaid hiddy giddy;
Ruschit haith to the bard, and ruggit his hair;
Callit him thrys thevisnek, to thraue in a widdy.
Thaj split 'him' fra the fortope to the fut thar:
The barde, smaddit lyke a smaik smorit in a smedy,
Ran fast to the dure, and gaif a gret caise;
Socht wattle to welsche him thar out in ane ydy.
The lordis leuch apon loft, and lykking thaj had,
That the barde was so bet:
The fulis sonde in the flet,
And mony mowis at mete On the flure maid.

LEII.

Syne for ane figonale of frut thaj strait in the feld;
The Tuchet gied to the Golk, and gaif him a fall,
Raif his taile fra his rig, with a cathy pleid;
The Golk gat wepe agane in the gret hall,
Cit the Tuchet be the tope, outtrowit his hed,
Flang him flat in the fyre, fetheris and all.
He cryid, Allace, with ane caise, reyn is my reid!
I am ungraciously gorrit, haith guttis and gall:
Zit he lay fra the lowe richt in a lyne.
Dughen thaj had remelis raucht:
Thaj forthocht that thaj faucht;
Kissit samyn and saucht, And sat doone lyne.

LEII.

All thus thir hathillis in hall heirly remanit,
 With all welthis at wis, and worchipe to vale :
 The Pape begynnis the grace, as greably ganit ;
 Mosche with thir worthyis, and went to counsaill.
 The pure howlatis appele completly was planyt,
 His salt and his soule forme, vncrely but faile :
 For the quhilk, thir lordis in leid nocht to layne it,
 He besocht of sucour, as souerane in saile,
 That thaj wald pray Natur his prent to reuue ;
 For it was haile his behest, :
 At thar alleris request,
 Myght dame Natur arrest Of him for to reue.

LEIII.

Chan rewit thir riallis of that rath mane,
 Baith Spirituale and Temperale, that kend the case ;
 And, considerand the caus, concludit in ane,
 That thaj wald Natur beleiue, of hir gret grace,
 To discend that samyn hour as thar souerane,
 At thar allaris instance, in that ilk place.
 The Pape and the patriackis, the prelatiis ilkane,
 Thus pray thaj as penitentiis ; and all that thar was.
 Quhar throu dame Natur the tress discendit that tyde,
 At thar haile instance ; :
 Quhom thaj ressaif with reuerens,
 And howsome obeysance, As Goddess and gyde.

LEIII.

It nedis nocht, quoth Natur, to renewe oucht
Of your entent in this tyde, or forthir to tell ;
I wait your will, and quhat way, ze wald that I wrocht
To reforme the Howlat, of faltis full fell,
It sall be done, as ze deme, dreid ze richt nocht :
I consent in this cause to your counsall,
Sen my self for your sake hiddis has socht,
Ze sall be specially sped, or ze maye spell :
Now ilka soull of the firth a fedder sall ta,
And len the Howlat, sen ze
Off him haue sic pete ;
And I sall gar thaim samyn be To growe or I ga.

LEII.

Chan ilk foule of his sicht a fedder has tane,
And lent to the Howlat in hast, hartlie but hone.
Dame Natur the nobillest necht in ane ;
For to ferme this federem, and dewly has done ;
Gart it ground, and growe gayly agane,
On the samyn Howlat, semely and sone.
Chan was he schand of his schape, and his schroude schane
Off alkyn colour most cleir heldit abone ;
The farrest foule of the firth, and hendest of bewes ;
So clene, and so colourlyke,
That no bird was him lyke,
Fra Burone to Berwike, Under the bewes.

LEF.

Thus was the Howlat in herde herely at hicht,
 flour of all fowls, throw fedderis so fair,
 He lukit to his lykame that lemyt so licht,
 So propir plesand of prent, providde to repar :
 He thocht him maid on the mold makles of mycht,
 As souerane him awone self, throw bewte he baie,
 Counterpalace to the Pape, our princis, I plicht ;
 So hiely he hyt him in Luciferis lair,
 That all the fowls of the firth he defowlit syne.
 Thus leit he no man his peir ;
 Gif ony nech wald him neir,
 He bad tham rebaldis oere, With a rupne.

LEFJ.

The pape, and the patriarchis, and princis of prow,
 I am cummyng of that kyn, be colingage knawin ;
 So fair is my fetherem I haf no falowe ;
 My schrowde and my scheneweid schir to be schawin.
 All birdis he rebalkit, that wald him nocht bowe ;
 In breth as a batall wricht full of host blatwin,
 With unloveable latis nocht till allow :
 Thus wyrit he the walentyne thraly and thrawin,
 That all the fowls with assent assemblit agane
 And plenzit to Natur
 Of this intollerable injur ;
 How the Howlat him bure So hie, and so haltant.

LEXXIII.

So pompos, impertinat, and reprobable,
In excess, our arrogant, thir birdis ilkane
Besocht Natur to ces that unsufferable.
Thar with that lady a lyte leuch hir allane :
My first making, quoth scho, was vnamendable,
Thocht I alterit, as ze all askit in ane,
Yit sall I preiss zow to pleiss, sen it is possible.
Scho callit the Howlat in haill, that was so haltane :
Thy pryde, quod the Princels, approachis our hie,
Lyke Lucifer in estate ;
And sen thou art so elate,
As the Ewangelist wrast, Thou sall latwe be.

LEXXIII.

The rent, and the ritches, that thou in rang,
Was of othir mennis all, and nocht of thy atone ;
Now ilk fowle his atone fedder sall agane sang ;
And mak the catif of kynd, till him self knawin.
As scho has demyt thaj haf done thraly in thrang.
Thar with dame Natur has to the hevin drawin :
Ascendit sone, in my sight, with solace and sang.
And ilk fowle take the sight ; shortly to schawin,
Held hame to thar hant, and thar herbery :
Duhar thaj war wont to remane,
All thir gudly ar gane ;
And thar leuit allane, The Howlat and I.

LEXXII.

Than this howlat hidowis of hate and of hyde,
 Put first fro poverte to pryce, and princis atone per ;
 Syne degradit fra grace, for his gret pryde,
 Bannyt bitterly his birth, baslefull in beir :
 He welterit, he wrythit, he warpit the tyde,
 That he was wrocht in this world wofull in weir :
 He crepillit, he crengit, he carfully cryd,
 He solpit, he sorowit, in sighingis seir.
 He said, Allace ! I am lost, lathest of all,
 Wylsyn in baile best ,
 I may be sampill heir eft
 That pryde neuer zit left His feir, but a fall.

LEXXIII.

I couth nocht won in to welth wretch ' that I ' wast,
 I was so wantoun of will, my werdis ar wan ;
 Thus for my hicht I am hurt, and harmit in haist,
 Cairfull and caytif for craft that I can :
 Duhen I was gewit as heir all thir hieast,
 Fra rule, resoun, and richt redles I ran ;
 Charfor I ly in the lyme, lympt, lathast :
 Now mark your mirour be me, all maner of man,
 Ze princis, ' prelattis ' of pryde for penneis and prowre,
 That pullis the pure ay,
 Ze sall syng as I say,
 All your welth will away, Thus I warn you.

LXXXIII.

Think how bare thou was borne, and bare ay will be,
For ought that sedis, of thy self in ony session;
Thy rude, thy clathis, nor thy cost, cummis nocht of the,
Bot of the frute of the erd, and Godis fuloun:
Dughen ilk thing has the atone, suthly we se,
Thy nakit cors bot of clay, a foule caroun,
Hattit, and hawles; quhar of art thou hie?
We cum pure, we gang pure, baith king and common.
Bot thou reule the richtuis, thy rowme sall ore.
Thus said the Howlat on hicht:
Now God for his gret micht,
Set our sawis in sight Of sanctis so sere!

LXXXIV.

Thus for ane Dow of Dunbar drew I this Dytte,
Dowit with ane Dowglas; and boith war thaj dowis:
In the forest forsaide, frely parlyte,
Of Cerneway, tendir and tryde, quho so trast trotois.
Mar my wit as my will, than suld I wele wepte;
Bot gif I lak in my leid, that nocht till allow is,
Ze wyle, for your worschipe, wepeth me no wyte:
Now blyth was the bliss barne, that all berne howis
He len was lyking and luf everlastand!—
In mirthfull moneth of May,
In myddis of Murraye,
Thus on a tyme be Cernway, happinnit **HOLLAND.**

Heir endis
The Duke of the Howlat.

'Scriptum'
Per 'manum' M. Joannis Alloan.

The Appendix.

APPENDIX.

It has not been thought necessary to point out such differences betwixt the two manuscript copies of the HOWLAT, as consist merely of variations in the orthography; unless when they happen to give the passage a more intelligible aspect.

Stanza I. l. 3, 'The blemes;' by adopting this reading, the line would signify that 'the flowers, or blossoms fairest of colour, glanced with the rays of the sun.' See Dr Jamieson's Dictionary.—l. 7, 'the seasoun.'

The four last lines of this stanza, in Bannatyne's MS. are as follows; along with the same as they occur in Pinkerton's edition, which will serve as a specimen of its general inaccuracy:—

Bann. MS.

Thus, throw the cliftis so cleir,
Alone, but fallow or feir,
I raikit till a reweir
That ryally reird.

Pink. Edit.

Thus throw the *clifts* so *clere*
Above, but fallow or *ferre*,
I *waikit* till a reweir
That ryallye *rered*.

St. II. l. 1, 'or rove;' l. 3, 'that brym,' and 'above;' l. 5, 'love was;' l. 7, 'coud hove;' l. 12, 'als was blyth.'

St. III. l. 3, 'all mennis;' l. 6, 'maistres;' l. 7, 'nedis;' l. 10, 'ane uthir.'

St. IV. l. 1, 'in that place;' l. 2, 'peteous;' l. 3, 'sowplit in;' l. 8, 'nycht in ane;' l. 13, 'a gowlyne.'

St. V. l. 2, 'hedand and;' l. 3, 'my face;' l. 4, 'fetherein;' l. 6, 'I waik;' l. 9, 'the fowlis;' l. 13, 'to my deid.'

St. VI. l. 2, 'skirp me;' l. 4, 'a besum;' l. 6, 'till accuse in this caus.'—
'accuse' has been substituted instead of 'agus,' which is the reading in Asloan's MS.—l. 7, 'mak me amendis.'

St. VII. l. 5, 'mansueit and demure;' l. 6, 'and schand;' l. 10, 'violent of vyce.'

St. VIII. l. 1, 'quhen that;' l. 3, 'ave;' l. 8, 'speciallie.'

St. IX. l. 3, 'byssym;' l. 6, 'to ask helpe;' l. 11, 'mak.'

- St. x. l. 2, 'bot of Natur;' l. 5, 'prophetis oure lerit all the lawe;' l. 8, 'papingo proude.'
- St. xii. l. 1, 'quhat sall;' l. 2, 'thir letteris;' l. 7, 'of kirk.'
- St. xiii. l. 2, 'Phesandis;'† l. 3, 'presentit tham;' l. 12, 'ding.'
- St. xv. l. 3, 'chertouris;' l. 4, 'clethis of hair;' l. 5, 'at all houris.'
- St. xvi. l. 1, 'enterit that bure;' l. 9, 'a cunnand.'
- St. xvii. l. 2, 'Drake;'† l. 4, 'correcter of;' l. 6, 'men of law;' l. 7, 'ruch ran.'†
- St. xviii. l. 12, 'a curate.'†
- St. xix. l. 11, 'thar coming.'†
- St. xx. l. 3, 'the foull.'†
- St. xxi. l. 2, 'sen thai the richt;'† l. 5, 'the mater, the maner.'
- St. xxii. l. 2, 'and syne to the.' The two last words are wanting in Asloan's MS.—l. 10, 'that Spirituale.'
- St. xxiii. l. 1, 'heir tauld.'
- St. xxiv. l. 2, 'hufe thai;' l. 7, 'till thai.'
- St. xxv. l. 4, 'secound;' l. 6, 'percyng the;'† l. 9, 'fermyt on fold.'
- St. xxvi. l. 3, 'of mycht;' l. 5, 'Spark Halkis;' l. 8, 'circulit with.'
- St. xxvii. l. 1, 'be conscience;' l. 2, 'clene gold;' l. 3, 'plant till;' l. 6, 'the gem and rubyis inrold.'
- St. xxviii. l. 1, 'secound;' l. 13, 'that blenkit.'†
- St. xxix. l. 4, 'ryell of array;' l. 6 and 7, these two lines are entirely omitted in Asloan's MS.
- St. xxxi. l. 3, 'in distres;' l. 12, the second 'O' does not occur in Bann. MS.
- St. xxxii. l. 2, 'ticht to;' l. 9, 'full gay;' l. 12, 'se schold.'
- St. xxxiii. l. 5, 'it wer lere for to tell.'
- St. xxxv. l. 1, 'to rayk;' l. 6, 'thay the gre;'† l. 10, 'all thir.'†
- St. xxxvi. l. 3, 'no way.'
- St. xxxvii. l. 4, 'orisons.'†
- St. xxxviii. l. 5, 'than in;' l. 7, 'and blicht;' l. 10, 'as thow wont.'†
- St. xxxix. l. 1, 'or with fays be;'† l. 9, 'thus fell;' l. 11, 'deidis he did.'
- St. xl. l. 2, 'set on the;' l. 4, 'slane in ficht;' l. 5, 'relevit was;' l. 6, 'ane wycht;' l. 7, 'mony a sad;'† l. 13, 'in this.'
- St. xli. l. 2, 'fell of;' l. 6, 'the pretius knyght that was in pane thore;' l. 7, 'deid doun adewe;' l. 10, 'bureit thair.'
- St. xlii. l. 7, 'galiard grome;' l. 9, 'reskewand agane the.'
- St. xlii. l. 3, 'caus the king;' l. 5, 'of weir;' l. 6, 'soueranis;'† l. 7, 'his capitanis.'
- St. xlv. l. 5, 'of Saxonis;' l. 7, 'thocht I thame hale knewe;'† l. 8, 'suld occupy us all;' l. 9, 'referring.'†
- St. xlvi. l. 4, 'trewly to tend;' l. 6, 'quarterly, that;' l. 8, 'quhilk oft was fayn.'†
- St. xlvii. l. 7, 'changit so.'

- St. XLVIII. l. 1, 'Als hjeast;' l. 3, 'in a port;' l. 5, 'the ouch busteous bair;' l. 7, 'saw I nevair;' l. 8, 'wechis;' l. 10, 'so feidfull.'
- St. XLIX. l. 1, 'the tend;' l. 4, 'in feir landis;' l. 6, 'off his;' l. 8, 'to my mater.'
- St. L. l. 1, 'Merlionis;' l. 4, 'subject men;' l. 5, 'cryand pewé;' l. 6, 'as pairt of;' l. 13, 'that wretchit dwerch was.'†
- St. LI. l. 6, 'quha richtly recordis;' l. 9, 'the prelati;' l. 10, 'thame wysalie.'
- St. LII. l. 12, 'wes the arras.'†
- St. LIII. l. 7, 'cardinalis all.'
- St. LIV. l. 1, 'as are;' l. 9, 'but les.'
- St. LV. l. 3, 'sawouris sawce;' l. 4, 'of force;' l. 5, 'mane metis;' l. 8, 'welth and worschip.'
- St. LVI. l. 1, 'in ane;' l. 5, 'and salue.'†
- St. LVII. l. 1, 'hod wird;' l. 8, 'altare;' l. 13, 'fra feindis.'
- St. LVIII. l. 12, 'fleece of.'
- St. LIX. l. 1, 'thai lofe;' l. 7, 'the cithill;' l. 8, 'dulset and;' l. 11, 'Portatisis;' l. 12, 'Symbaclanis.'
- St. LX. l. 1, 'a schour;' l. 4, 'with cantelis;' l. 13, 'a man.'
- St. LXI. l. 2, 'Corncraik;' l. 3, 'poyndit;' l. 4, 'pryndfald;' l. 4, 'becaus thai;' l. 9, 'jupceis.'
- St. LXII. l. 3, 'dynydeach;' l. 4, 'ryve;' l. 5, 'Misch makmory ach mach mountir;' l. 8, 'are the,' and 'the Erchrye.'
- St. LXIII. l. 5, 'barde wox;' l. 8, 'as tratour;' l. 9, 'rywe;' l. 10, 'than the dene rurale worth reid.'
- St. LXIV. l. 2, 'the Tuquheit;' l. 5, 'fylit him.'
- St. LXV. l. 3, 'fra his heid;' l. 9, 'lycht in lyne;' l. 12, 'kissit syne.'†
- St. LXVI. l. 1, 'athillis;' l. 9, 'present to.'
- St. LXVII. l. 2, 'that kennit;' l. 8, 'penitent.'
- St. LXVIII. l. 4, 'to reasoun;' l. 8, 'or I mair;' l. 11, 'haue pete.'
- St. LXIX. l. 2, 'lent the;' l. 4, 'federein;' l. 5, 'and gane;' l. 7, 'was the;' l. 12, 'fro Byron.'
- St. LXX. l. 7, 'with the Pape;' l. 12, 'rebaleis.'
- St. LXXI. l. 2, 'consignage;' l. 3, 'fetherein;' l. 8, 'viciit;' l. 13, 'so hautane.'
- St. LXXII. l. 1, 'impertinax;' l. 4, 'that with that lady allyt;' l. 8, 'hautane.'
- St. LXXIII. l. 4, 'till thy self;' l. 8, 'and schortly;' l. 9, 'and to;' l. 11, 'and gane.'
- St. LXXIV. l. 4, 'bailfully;' l. 8, 'and sorowit;' l. 10, 'bysym.'
- St. LXXV. l. 1, 'wretch wayest;' l. 2, 'in will;' l. 5, 'was of hewit;' l. 7, 'the lathest;' l. 8, 'mek zour;' l. 9, 'prelettis of pryde.'† Asloane's MS. has 'prencis,' or 'princis,' repeated.
- St. LXXVI. l. 3, 'claithis, thi cost;' l. 7, 'hafes;' l. 11, 'thy gret.'
- St. LXXVII. l. 4, 'Terway;' l. 6, 'gif lak;' l. 12, 'thus in.'

In the above list, I have put a mark (§) to such of the readings as seem to be preferable to those in Asloan's manuscript, although they have not been adopted. Notwithstanding all the vigilance made use of to make the text as accurate as possible, the following *errata* require to be corrected. If any others should have likewise escaped, I flatter myself that they are not of much importance.

St. XVI. l. 5, 'Thai war,' read 'Thai mak.'—St. XXII. l. 6. 'Emperour;' this word, which is contracted in the MS. in this, and in one or two other places, should have been printed 'Empriour.'—St. XXXIV. l. 8, 'Estate,' read 'Estatis.'—St. XLV. l. 7, 'That thai,' read 'Thocht I thaim.'—St. 46, l. 8, 'Aft,' read 'Oft;' l. 9, 'Armis,' read 'Armes.'—St. XLVII. l. 9, 'bowit,' dele the inverted commas.

St. I. *In the myddis of May*.—Beyond all question, the most extensive and singular specimen of alliterative composition in the English language, is the *Visions of Piers Plowman*, which Fame has ascribed to Robert Langland, who flourished about the year 1370, and who, by the bye, is claimed as a native of Scotland, by David Buchanan, one of our older biographical writers, in his unpublished treatise *De Scriptoribus Scotiæ illustribus*. Much curious information concerning alliterative verse is contained in the preface to the splendid edition of the *Visions*, by the late Dr Whittaker. But I need not enlarge on a subject on which so much has been said; nor attempt to point out the motives which led authors, at successive and different times, to adopt this favourite practice of bringing together, (in the words of Sir Philip Sidney,) "*Rimes Running in Rattling Rimes*."

In reference to the alliterative style of the *HOWLAT*, Mr George Chalmers, in the preface to his elaborate edition of Sir David Lyndsay's Works, says, "If it be inquired, by what artifices of composition the poets of these times sacrificed common sense to far-fetched conceits, they will be found in two sources; their desire of alliteration, and their passion for antiquated phraseology. In obtaining the first object, they searched for words having the same prefixes, without any analogy of sense; and in quest of the last, they went beyond the old English, into the Anglo-Saxon speech, as they found it in vulgar use. *They thus sacrificed sense to sound, and facility to facture*."—Not so, however, according to Holofernes, in *Love's Labour's Lost*; who, in his "ex-

temporal epitaph" on the "Death of the Deer," says, "I will something affect the letter, (that is, I will practise alliteration; and, gentle reader, pray mark the reason)—for *it argues facility*."

St. v.—The complaint of this melancholy bird, as Mr Alexander Thomson, in his MS. remarks on this poem, has observed, is not like that of the Owl in Gray's Elegy, complaining to the moon

"Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign"—

But rather resembles that of Shakespeare's Richard, when descanting on his own deformity.

St. XIII.—XIX.—In these stanzas, the different birds belonging to the State Temporal, with their several dignities, are minutely described. "Some ingenuity," as Sir Walter Scott, in a MS. note, observes, "is displayed in selecting the points of connection betwixt the particular species of birds, and the ranks and orders assigned to each. The author has anticipated Dryden, who describes the Catholic clergy, on account of their early and vigilant church service, under character of 'the bird which warned Saint Peter of his fall'—for Holland informs us,

'The Cok in his cler cap that crawis and cryis,
Was chosyn Chantor.'

The mendicant friars are alily described under the guise of

'Crying Crawis and Cais that cravis the corn.'

—The solitary Heron is a contemplative Chartreux. Extensive notes," Sir Walter adds, "might be written on this part of the poem;" which, however, the editor will not at present attempt.

St. XIX. l. 4, '*Se fowle and seid fowle*.'—Chaucer also speaks of "Water-foulis" and "Seed-foulis"—In his poem, the "Assemblie of Foulis," all the birds are gathered before the "noble Goddesse, Nature, on St. Valentine's Day, to choose their makes;" but before proceeding to mention their names, the poet separates them in the following manner :—

"This noble Empresse, full of all grace,
Bad every foule take her own place,
As they were wont alway, fro yere to yere,
On Sanct Valentine's day, standen here.

That is to saie, the foules of rauine
Were highest set, and then the foules smale
That eaten, as that Nature would encline

As worme or thing, of which I tell no tale
 But water foule, sate lowest in the dale ;
 And foules that liueth by sede, sat on the grene,
 And that so many, that wonder was to sene."

St. XXVII.—The armorial bearings described in this and some of the following stanzas, might receive some illustration from the Register of Armes, by Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, lately published from the original manuscript. The description of the arms of the "Empriour of Almane," by our author, corresponds to those of the "Empriour of Rome," by the Lord Lyon King at Arms, who has in the same manner blazoned the armorial bearings of the Earl of Douglas ; of Douglas, Earl of Murray ; and of Douglas, Earl of Ormond ; but with *some differens*, which it is unnecessary in this place to be at the trouble of pointing out.

St. XXIX.—As descriptive of the Royal Arms of Scotland, I may copy a passage from a small tractat of the Scots Original, preserved in Asloan's manuscript, which the reader may compare with the corresponding passage in Fordun.—*Scotichronicon*, Vol. I. p. 47.

"Then the Kingis son, callit to name Fergus Ferherd, gadderit gret power of Scottis men, and come out our Scotland maior, or Ireland, in less Scotland, and tuke the crowne of it, and was our first king, and brocht the armes of Scotland. The quhilkis remaynis zit—an Red rampand Lyoun, in a scheld of gold ; viz.

Albion in terris rex primus germine Scotis
 Illorum turmis rubri tulit arma leonis,
 Fergusius fulvo Ferherd rugientis in aruo.
 Liliger ille leo rosidus nunc pingiter auro
 Christum tercentis terdenes prefuit annis."—*Fol. 95.*

The following extract presents the subject in a more ludicrous point of view, being indeed taken from one of those exaggerated satirical accounts of our country, in which the English people, even to a later period than the times of Swift or of Churchill, seem to have delighted themselves, as affording them a vent to their national antipathy. "The arms of the kingdom was anciently a Red Lyon Rampant in a field of gold ; but *An. Dom. 787*, they had the augmentation of the double tressure, for assisting the French King ; but his Majesties arms in *Scotland* is a mere *Hysteron Proteron*—the pride of the people being such, as to place the *Scots* arms in the dexter quarter of the escutcheon, and make the unicorn the dexter supporter, with the thistle at his heel, with a suitable motto—'*Nemo me impune lacesset*,' true enough ; whoever deals with them, shall be sure to smart for't : The thistle was wisely placed there, partly to shew the fertility of the country—Nature alone producing plenty of these gay flowers—and partly as an emblem of the people ; the top thereof having some colour of a flower, but the bulk and substance of it is only sharp and poysonous pricks."—*A Modern Account of Scotland*, 1679, 4to, p. 3.

St. xxix.—The latter lines of this stanza are very curious, and have been considered as a prophetick enunciation of the Union of the crowns of Scotland and England, about a century and a half before that event was accomplished in the person of James VI. A curious prediction of this kind is detailed in Bishop Spotiswood's History.

St. xxx.—The history of the Douglasses, during the time of our author, offers much curious and important matter of enquiry, had this been a suitable place for entering on the subject. The fate of William, Eighth Earl of Douglas, has been alluded to in the preface. His brother and successor, James, after the discomfiture at Arkinholm, in 1455, and the forfeiture of his title and estates, (Acta Parl. vol. II. p. 42 and 75,) which immediately followed, retired to England, where he long lived in retirement, without any further attempt to disturb the publick tranquillity. At length, however, in the year 1483, he was induced to make an excursion into his native land, when he was taken prisoner, and sentenced by James the Third to be confined in the Abbey of Lindores—a fate which he met with great resignation; observing, "*He that may no better be, must be a Monk.*" He entered in holy orders—having, as it is said, been brought up in his youth with a view to church preferment—and died there, 15th April, 1488. His epitaph may be seen in *Crawford's Peerage*, p. 59.

St. xxx. l. 5.—Bellenden, in his translation of Hector Boece's Croniklis, uses the same term of commendation, when speaking of "the illuster surname of Dowglas, quhillis," he says, "war evir the sicker targe and *weirnal* of Scotland aganis Inglismen; and wan many landis be thair singular manheid and vassalage;" he afterwards adds, that "sen that surname was put down, Scotland has done few vailyhent dedis in England."—*fol. CCx.* Godscroft repeats these words whilst vindicating that family from the charges usually made against them:—"Truely," he says, "if we shall speake without partiality, their greatnesse was so usefull to their king and country, that *Hector Boetius* stickes not to say, the *Douglasses* were ever the sure buckler and warre-wall of Scotland, and wonne many lands by their singular manhood and vassalages; for they decored this realme with many noble acts, and by the glory of their martiall deeds."—p. 207.

St. xxxii.—If we reject the notion of the poem containing a satire on King James II., it might the more readily admit of a doubt, whether it was not written previous to the death of Earl William, in 1452, since the manner in which the *then* Earl of Douglas is spoken of, seems to be equally applicable to either of the brothers. The probability, however, is in favour of what is elsewhere stated at sufficient length: otherwise the author most assuredly would not have limited the *green-tree* of Douglas to *four* branches; and it would have been a most inexcusable oversight in Holland, when describing the members of that family, to which he appears to have been so much attached, and mentioning the younger brothers so particularly, had he passed over in silence the *second* brother, and the presumptive heir of succession to the earldom.

St. XXXV.—XLI.—In some respects, Holland, in the Episode contained in these stanzas concerning the ‘gud Schir James,’ or, as he is sometimes called, ‘the Black Douglas,’ has greatly exceeded his illustrious predecessor, the Archdeacon of Aberdeen, with whose metrical history of the Bruce, he was evidently acquainted. Several lines might be quoted, with which there is too close a similarity to suppose it to have been merely accidental. On this subject, Wynthown, the Prior of Lochlevin, is remarkably concise; contenting himself with referring his readers to Barbour. There was no great loss sustained, probably, in his so doing; as it is not likely that he would have added anything to the interest of his predecessor’s narrative. After telling us, that in 1320, King Robert lay in *lang sicknes* in Cardross, and that his body was interred in the Kirk of Dunfermline, he merely adds,

“ And gud Jamys of Dowglas
His Hart tuk, as fyrst orderyd was
For to bere in the Holy Land.
How that that wes tene on hand,
Well purportis Browsers buk,
Quhay will tharof the matere luke.”

St. XLIII.—Since writing the preface, I observe that “Archibaldus Moraviae Comes,” appears as one of the witnesses to a publick deed, 28th June, 1445. —(*Acta Parl.* vol. II. p. 59.) The earliest mention of him under that title, which I had then discovered, was in the curious paper, of date, 25th August, 1447, printed by Hay of Drumboote, (in his Vindication of Elizabeth More; Edin. 1723, 4to, p. 65, &c.) determining the priority of birth in favour of James, over Archibald, who, it appears, were twin-brothers; in which Sir James is designated as “of Heriotmuir;” and his brother is expressly called “Archibald of Douglas, Erle of Murrawe.” The succession was thus amicably adjusted, in the event that, “gif it sall happen the said [William] Lord Erle, to decesse withoutyn ayrs of his body lauchfullie to be gottin.”—The name of Archibald, Earl of Murray, is again mentioned, in 1449, as one of the conservators of a truce with England.—(*Rymeri Foedera*, XI. 253, &c.) But the former deed is sufficient to shew that the marriage was celebrated as early as 1445. From Godscroft we learn that it was subsequent to the death of the Earl of Murray, the father of the lady. There is usually a sad want of dates in ascertaining such minute points of history.

St. XLIV.—The name of the Earl of Ormond occurs likewise among the witnesses in the deed above referred to, in June 1445. The title therefore must have been conferred on him not long after his brother, the Earl of Douglas, had gained the ascendancy in matters of state,

St. XLIV. l. 3, ‘*And richt so did the ferd.*’—On the margin of Bannatyne’s MS., opposite these words, is affixed the name of “Lord Balveny;” younger brother, as here described, of the Douglasses.

St. LIX.—Lord Hailes, who speaks of the Howlat as a verbose work, adds, that it must have merit with antiquaries, from the stanzas describing “the kyndis of instruments, the sportaris, (jugglers,) the Irish bard, and the fulis.” Many of the musical instruments here mentioned, are likewise named by Gawin Douglas, in his *Palice of Honour*. His words are,

“ In modulatioun hard I play and sing
 Faburdoun, priksang, discant, countering,
 Cant organe, figuratioun, and gemmell ;
 On croud, lute, harp, with mony gudlie spring ;
 Schalmes, clariounes, portatiues, hard I ring,
 Monycord, organe, tympane, and cymbell,
 Sytholl, psalterie, and voices sweet as bell,” &c.

Edit. Edin. 1579, p. 14.

St. LX.—LXI.—The wonderful exploits of the juggler here described may remind some readers of the curious stanza, in Douglas's *Palice of Honour*, of a similar nature ; where the author says,

“ The Nigromansie thair saw I eik anone,
 Of Benytas, Bongo, and Freir Bacone,
 With mony subtill point of Juglairy ;
 Of Flanders peis maid mony precious stone,
 Ane greit laid sadill of a siching bone,
 Of ane nutemug thay maid a Monk in hy,
 Ane paroche kirk of ane penny pye :
 And Benytas of ane mussill maid an aip,
 With mony uther subtill mow and jaip.”

Edit. Edin. 1579, p. 56.

St. XLII.—“ One is naturally arrested by the character of the Irish Bard, who breaks in at the banquet like a sturdy beggar, reciting in alternate lines the Irish gibberish by which he proposed to deserve entertainment ; and expressing in English his coarse and unmannerly wants and demands. The jargon he speaks is too much corrupted, I fear, to be intelligible.”—*Manuscript Note by Sir W. Scott.*

If such was the usual conduct of the strolling bards in those days, we need not be much surprised in finding them classed with *sornaris*, sturdy beggars, and other *misterfull* men, who were denounced as vagrants, and proceeded against accordingly. There is an Act of Parliament in the year 1449, against *bardis*, or “ ony that *makis thaim fulis* that *ar nocht bardis*, or sic lik vtheris rynaris aboute.”—(*Acta Parl. Vol. II. p. 36.*)

In this stanza, as the writer of the manuscript critique on the poem has observed, “ there are some lines wholly Irish, which have as uncouth and forbid-

ding an appearance, as the scene in the Punic or Carthaginian language, which Plautus has inserted in one of his comedies.—(*Poenulus*, Act. v. Sc. 1.)”

St. LXLIV.—“The order of the entertainment is given very correctly; and may be considered as a picturesque delineation of a banquet of the period. There is first a religious hymn to the Virgin; then a vocal and instrumental concert; then the deceptions and tricks of a juggler or conjuror; then the intrusion of the Irish bard, with behaviour as rude as his dialect—his combat with the two professed fools—and the fight of the two fools or jesters with each other—all of which were amusements peculiar to the period. In paintings of the older schools, we often see such strange associations as persons of quality feasting at the high *dais*, while beggars attend in the porch, and dwarfs and jesters are gamboling or fighting on the floor.”—*Manuscript Note by Sir W. Scott*.

St. LXVIII.—“If nothing more were meant by the Owl, than the bird commonly so called, I should scarcely think the improvement of his form, what the critics call a *Dignus Vindice Nodus*, a cause of sufficient importance to warrant the introduction of such a *Prosopopœia* as Nature.”—*Manuscript Critique*, &c. p. 12.

St. LXXVI. l. 9.—In a note to the preface, (p. 2,) the false reading of *THE CROWN* in Pinkerton's edition is taken notice of; as on these words part of the strength of his argument is founded. But except in one other instance, I have not thought it necessary to trouble either the reader or myself in pointing out the errors which have crept into that edition of the *Howlat*; which, indeed, without any sort of exaggeration, might perhaps be termed the most inaccurate copy of any old Scottish poem which has in our days been submitted to the publick. The blame, however, (it is but just to remark,) does not rest with the editor, who, in this, as well as in other instances, was obliged to trust to persons who were not very competent to the task.

In the conclusion to the preface, a curious passage in Blind Harry's Wallace, alluding to the *Howlat*, is given; and it is rather singular, that the comparison which is there made use of, should have been adopted from so fabulous a writer by our old historian, John Major, whose words again have been re-echoed by subsequent writers.—*Historia, etc. Paris*, 1521, fol. LXXI.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY JAMES BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY.

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